

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method of generating test code for an automated test procedure
2 applicable to a system comprising a plurality of interconnected elements, the method
3 comprising the steps of:
4 defining a source file having a plurality of tags, each tag associated with a
5 member of a library of executable code objects defining a set of instructions for
6 performing a portion of the automatic test procedure;
7 generating a test plan in a conversational language from the source file; and
8 generating the test code for the automated test procedure from the source file.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating a test plan
2 comprises the steps of :
3 translating the tags; and
4 generating a conversational language phrase for each translated tag.

1 3. The method of claim 2, wherein the test plan comprises a test index
2 identifying the system elements tested by the test code, the test index generated by
3 performing the step of scanning the interpreted tags to identify the system elements
4 tested by the test code.

1 4. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of generating a test plan
2 further comprises the steps of:
3 identifying an uninterpretable tag in the test plan; and
4 appending the test plan with an error message identifying the uninterpretable
5 tag.

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1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the library of executable code objects
2 comprises a first executable code object defining a set of instructions for performing
3 method steps comprising the steps of:
4 issuing a command to a commanded system element; and
5 intercepting a message responsive to the command from the commanded
6 element.

1 6. The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of:
2 evaluating the message responsive to the command; and
3 providing an error message according to the evaluated message.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating test code for
2 the automated test procedure comprises the step of translating the executable code
3 objects associated with the tag in the source file.

1 8. An apparatus for generating test code for an automated test procedure
2 applicable to a system comprising a plurality of interconnected elements, comprising:
3 means for defining a source file having a plurality of tags, each tag associated
4 with a member of a library of executable code objects defining a set of instructions
5 for performing a portion of the automatic test procedure;
6 means for generating a test plan in a conversational language from the source
7 file; and
8 means for generating the test code for the automated test procedure from the
9 source file.

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3 means for translating the tags; and
4 means for generating a conversational language phrase for each translated tag.

1 11. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the means for generating a test plan
2 further comprises:

1 12. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the library of executable code
2 objects comprises a first executable code object comprising:
3 means for issuing a command to a commanded system element; and
4 means for intercepting a message responsive to the command from the
5 commanded element.

1 13. The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising:
2 means for evaluating the message responsive to the command; and
3 means for providing an error message according to the evaluated message.

1 14. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the means for generating test code
2 for the automated test procedure comprises means for translating the executable code
3 objects associated with the tag in the source file.

1 15. A program storage device, readable by a computer, tangibly embodying
2 at least one program of instructions executable by the computer to perform method steps
3 of generating test code for an automated test procedure applicable to a system
4 comprising a plurality of interconnected elements, the method comprising the steps of:
5 defining a source file having a plurality of tags, each tag associated with a
6 member of a library of executable code objects defining a set of instructions for
7 performing a portion of the automatic test procedure;
8 generating a test plan in a conversational language from the source file; and
9 generating the test code for the automated test procedure from the source file.

1 16. The program storage device of claim 15, wherein the method step of
2 generating a test plan comprises the method steps of :
3 translating the tags; and
4 generating a conversational language phrase for each translated tag.

1 17. The program storage device of claim 16, wherein the test plan
2 comprises a test index identifying the system elements tested by the test code, the test
3 index generated by performing the step of scanning the interpreted tags to identify the
4 system elements tested by the test code.

1 18. The program storage device of claim 16, wherein the step of
2 generating a test plan further comprises the method steps of:
3 identifying an uninterpretable tag in the test plan; and
4 appending the test plan with an error message identifying the uninterpretable
5 tag.

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21. The program storage device of claim 15, wherein the method step of
generating test code for the automated test procedure comprises the method step of
translating the executable code objects associated with the tag in the source file.

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